

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 122716  
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 INR-10 CIAE-00 INRE-00 SS-15  
SSO-00 NSCE-00 L-03 /048 R

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APPROVED BY ARA:J A BUSHNELL  
ARA/RPP:C FINAN  
ARA:F J MCNEIL (DRAFT)

-----098355 131756Z /43

O 131701Z MAY 78 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO NIACT IMMEDIATE  
INFO OASD/ISA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
CNO WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
CINCLANTFLT NORFOLK VA IMMEDIATE  
USCINCSO PANAMA CZ IMMEDIATE  
USCOMSOLANT ROOSEVELT ROADS PR IMMEDIATE  
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE IMMEDIATE 0296

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 122716

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PGOV, MARR

SUBJECT:UNITAS XIX: OPERATIONS IN BEAGLE CHANNEL

1. IN PREPARATION FOR UNITAS XIX JOINT PLANNING SESSION  
THAT WILL BEGIN MAY 15, DEPARTMENT HAS DECIDED TO SEEK PORT  
CALLS DURING EXERCISE IN BOTH USHUAIA AND PUERTO WILLIAMS.  
FOLLOWING MEMORANDUM WAS SENT ON MAY 12 FROM ARA TO  
OASD/ISA OUTLINING CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THESE PORT CALLS  
SHOULD TAKE PLACE.

2. BEGIN TEXT:  
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AS YOU MAY KNOW, IN THE CONTEXT OF PLANNING FOR UNITAS  
XIX ARGENTINA IS INSISTENT ON A CALL BY US FORCES AT  
USHUAIA, A PORT IN THE BEAGLE CHANNEL. USHUAIA IS UNDIS-  
PUTED ARGENTINE TERRITORY, BUT THE CHANNEL IS PART OF A  
TERRITORIAL CONTROVERSY BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND CHILE.

OUR EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO STRONGLY RECOMMENDS AGAINST THE PORT CALL AS INVOLVING US INADVERTENTLY, IN THE DISPUTE. HOWEVER, OUR EMBASSY IN BUENOS AIRES BELIEVES OUR REFUSAL COULD LEAD ARGENTINA TO CANCEL UNITAS PARTICIPATION THIS YEAR. APPARENTLY, PREVIOUS UNITAS CRUISES HAVE NOT USED THE BEAGLE CHANNEL, SO ACCEDING TO THE ARGENTINA PROPOSAL

WOULD BE, POLITICS ASIDE, A PRECEDENT.

THROUGH ISA WE ASKED THE NAVY TO LOOK INTO PURELY LOGISTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF UNITAS FORCES USING THE BEAGLE CHANNEL FOR THE FIRST TIME (E.G., INCREASED STEAMING TIME, INCREASED FUEL EXPENDITURE, POSSIBLE INADEQUATE DOCKING AND SUPPORT FACILITIES). THE CNO HAD CONCURRENTLY TASKED CINCLANTFLT FOR THE SAME INFORMATION. IN A SEPARATE MEMORANDUM TO ISA THE NAVY SAYS IN EFFECT IT CANNOT MAKE A DECISION WITHOUT STATE DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE.

ARA STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE UNITAS EXERCISE AND WOULD REGRET THIS ISSUE'S FORCING A PARTICIPANT TO DROP OUT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THIS BUREAU EMPHATICALLY DOES NOT WANT THE APOLITICAL UNITAS CRUISE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE EMOTIONAL BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE.

WE SHOULD TELL THE ARGENTINES:

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-- IT IS U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY TO REMAIN ABSOLUTELY NEUTRAL WITH RESPECT TO THE BEAGLE CHANNEL ISSUE.

-- IF WE ARE TO VISIT USHUAIA, WE WOULD HAVE TO REQUEST CHILEAN PERMISSION TO VISIT PUERTO WILLIAMS ALSO IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS FAVORING EITHER ARGENTINA OR CHILE IN THIS SENSITIVE REGION.

-- THE U.S. UNITAS FORCE WOULD BE SPLIT IN TWO FOR THE BEAGLE CHANNEL PORTION OF THE EXERCISE. USHUAIA AND PUERTO WILLIAMS WOULD BE VISITED SIMULTANEOUSLY. U.S. PARTICIPANT FORCES WOULD BE DIVIDED EQUALLY. THE COMMANDER OF UNITAS WOULD PAY IDENTICAL OFFICIAL VISITS TO BOTH PORTS.

IF THE ARGENTINES INSIST ON A VISIT TO USHUAIA AND THE CHILEANS ACCEPT A PUERTO WILLIAMS PORT CALL, WE WOULD AGREE TO A UNITAS PRESENCE IN THE BEAGLE CHANNEL AS OUTLINED ABOVE.

IF CHILE TURNS DOWN PUERTO WILLIAMS PORT CALL AND THE ARGENTINES CONTINUE TO INSIST ON THE USHUAIA VISIT, ARA

BELIEVES WE MUST REGRETFULLY DECLINE THE OFFER OF USHUAIA.  
VANCE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DISPUTES, UNITAS XIX, MILITARY EXERCISES, PORT CALLS, BEAGLE CHANNEL, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, NEUTRALISM  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Number:** 1978STATE122716  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** C BRAYSHAW/KAR  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ORIGIN ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** UNITAS XIX: OPERATIONS IN BEAGLE CHANNEL  
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**To:** BUENOS AIRES SANTIAGO  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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